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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

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The Editor
TUC - Hour of Decision

John Forrester and
Norman Atkinson MP
Labour's Programme

Andrew Rothstein
**Terrorism—
Some Plain Words**

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Thalidomide Judgement/F. H. A. Micklewright
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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

TUC—HOUR OF DECISION

New Forms of Anti-Union Offensive—Sharpening of Britain's Crisis—Inflationary 'Boom'—'Counter-Inflationary' Offensive—Mad Dance of High Interest Rates, Prices and Profits—Jungle of World Capitalist Economy—A Dizzy Dance—Mariners without a Compass—Fears of a World Slump—Labour's Opportunity—By-Election Lessons—Left Advance to End Bipartisanship—Class Confrontation—Strategy for United Strength—Trade Unions' Strength and Responsibilities—Key Political Role of the Trade Unions—Storm Signals—Moves for Action—Significant Decisions—Militant Agenda—International Outlook—A Call to Action

'We are driving around in a car in which none of the instruments work and there isn't a bright mechanic in sight.'
Sunday Telegraph, July 8, 1973.

August 13, 1973

This year's TUC meets in emergency conditions without previous parallel. The Heath Tory government offensive, in the midst of the manifest crisis of Britain's economy, is directed to throttle independent trade unionism and annul rights won by generations of struggle. This offensive is now approaching its highest intensity. The initial offensive launched last year, through the Industrial Relations Act and Industrial Courts to use police powers, imprisonment and financial confiscatory measures to reduce the unions to submission, met with a rebuff through the resistance of major unions and the militant strength of the organised workers in industry, with the key role of the shop stewards.

New Forms of Anti-Union Offensive

Hence the offensive this year is directed to the aim of isolating the militant workers and the shop stewards by drawing the right-wing trade union leaders into a triple combination of the Tory government, the Confederation of British Industry and the TUC General Council, in the style of the old model of Mondism. But the days of Mondism belong to the past. The strength of working class militancy in the main union organisations as well as the strength in numbers of the organised workers today, is at a higher level than at any previous point in the history of trade unionism. The agenda of this year's TUC demonstrates this militancy. Thus all the indications point to decisive battles in front.

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Sharpening of Britain's Crisis

This deepening class confrontation is taking place in the midst of an extreme intensification of the economic-political contradictions of Britain's crisis. Through all the years since 1945, equally under Tory and Labour governments, the technique of 'stop-go' has been practised: the alternation of sharp bouts of accelerated inflation to make a show of triumphant expansion for the purpose of an election or other short-term political requirements, followed by a severe deflationary offensive against the living standards of the people to pay for the consequent heavy deficit on the balance of payments. But never in the whole record of modern British capitalism has this 'stop-go' technique been carried to such extremes as under the Heath Tory government.

Inflationary 'Boom'

The wild inflationary expansion of the money supply in 1972 and the beginning of 1973, reaching an annual rate of 40 per cent, was still being maintained at an annual rate of 30 per cent during the five weeks up to June 20, 1973 (*Times*, July 24). The total money stock, according to official returns, increased from £22,630 million in June 1972 to £27,870 million in June 1973, or an expansion of £5,240 million in 12 months. At the same time the budget was planned in March for a record deficit of £4,423 million. This reckless inflationary expansion to engineer a 'boom' provided the basis for government ministers in May to boast of the upward movement achieved, and predict a glowing prospect of prosperous expansion continuing henceforward into the indefinite future. 'Britain's exciting economic prospect' was the theme of Secretary of Trade and Industry Peter Walker in May. The Confederation of British Industry on May 1 chose the ominous formula: 'Britain's economy is going up like a rocket.' In the face of this unparalleled inflationary expansion of many thousands of millions of pounds to produce a 'boom' the precautionary measure of a withdrawal of £260 million of 'special deposits' from the banks was a sprat to stop an ocean.

'Counter-Inflationary' Offensive

All this sunshine talk of government ministers in May about Britain's prospect of unbroken soaring advance received a body-blow in June when the official returns revealed a record trade deficit in May amounting to £211 million, leading to official forecasts of a £1,000 million trade deficit for the year, and an even higher forecast of a £2,000 million trade deficit for the year in the report of the

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London and Cambridge Economic Service (*Times*, July 19). Hasty explanations were offered by ministers that all this record swelling deficit was a sign of the real advance through the expansion of imports of raw materials and machinery for increasing production. But in practice the sunshine talk was succeeded by a grim call to the nation to devote every effort to 'counter inflation' (the government's own inflation) as the supreme task. Chancellor Barber's programme of cuts of £600 million announced on May 21 was the opening of this offensive. Not surprisingly Sir George Bolton, Director of Lloyds and former Director of the Bank of England, commented on May 31 on this 'counter-inflationary' offensive of the government: 'A policy of counter-inflation cannot succeed by itself when the government is at the same time creating monetary inflation' (*Times*, June 1).

Mad Dance of High Interest Rates, Prices and Profits

By July the government's emergency measures reached panic proportions. On July 20 the bank rate ('minimum lending rate') was raised to the desperately high figure of 9 per cent. Even this was not found enough. On July 27 the bank rate was raised still further to the unprecedented level of 11½ per cent. Under the shock of the onset of war in August 1914, the bank rate had been raised to 10 per cent for a short time. This bank rate of 11½ per cent was the highest since the institution of bank rate in 1797. It opened the way to an ever widening range of consequent increases of the already onerous mortgage rates and other charges on the people, alongside the swelling flood of rising prices of commodities and necessities, accelerated by the operations of the Price Commission and the costs of accession to the Common Market and accompanying a vast expansion of business and bank profits. The unprecedented high interest rate, calculated to attract foreign speculators' hot money, only temporarily interrupted the sinking of the pound in the world money markets. In July the fall of the reserves by £135 million, alongside the loan of foreign currency of £119 million by public bodies, revealed that in place of the previous 'free floating', or unchecked depreciation, hundreds of millions of pounds were now being spent in the attempt to save the pound from sinking further. The bankruptcy of the policies of the Heath government was becoming manifest to all.

Jungle of World Capitalist Economy

These convulsions of Britain's economy under the Heath govern-

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ment have been only part of the extreme instability of trading and currency relations of all countries of world capitalism in the present phase. These extreme contradictions of present-day capitalism have found sharpest expression in the conflict of currencies. The previous dominant role of the dollar in the capitalist world had been enshrined in the Bretton Woods Agreement at the end of the second world war. When this dollar domination finally collapsed with the abandonment of dollar convertibility into gold in August 1971, the Washington Financial Agreement of December 1971 sought to establish a new system of fixed exchange rates to be maintained by all the leading countries, with strict conditions for any variation from the fixed rate. 'The most significant monetary agreement in the history of the world' was the declaration of President Nixon at the time. Within a year it had collapsed.

A Dizzy Dance

Thereafter followed a dizzy whirligig of currency fluctuations, of revaluations and devaluations, in bewildering succession. Under heavy pressure even the dollar was devalued twice, although grudgingly and with the continuing obstinate determination of the lords of the dollar to keep its gold valuation as close as possible to the 1934 Roosevelt level of $35 to the ounce of gold, so that even after devaluation the figure was only changed to $42 to the ounce of gold, although the general price level had trebled. The universal inflation was making more and more meaningless the nominal valuation in terms of $42 to the ounce of gold maintained in dealings between the central banks. The West German mark was revalued, that is valued at a higher rate four times in the past four years, yet at the end had depreciated 40 per cent in relation to the dollar since the realignment of currencies. Meanwhile the free market price of gold soared and had reached in July of this year $120 an ounce. This glaring contradiction between the nominal valuation of $42 an ounce maintained for transactions between the central banks, and the free market rate, reached by transactions in which the central banks were precluded from participating, has demonstrated the acute crisis of the present phase of world capitalist economy.

Mariners without a Compass

All the attempts of the leaders of monopoly capitalism to find a solution to these extreme contradictions of the present phase of capitalist economy have so far met with successive failures. In June of last year Britain initiated the strategy of 'free floating' of the

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pound, which was in fact devaluation with no fixed limit, and therefore giving an indefinitely extending advantage against competitors. Despite the indignant expressions by the leaders of other financial centres at this strategy of devaluation with no fixed rate, in practice this strategy became widely adopted by the other centres in various forms. In consequence the picture of the relations of currencies of the capitalist world became a picture of a sea of floating currencies with a ceaseless fluctuation of exchange rates. The practical difficulties of this situation led to new attempts to find a solution. The Committee of Twenty, representing the main financial centres in the International Monetary Fund, embarked on the task to devise a 'new international monetary system'. The meetings so far, however, have produced no definite result save to decide to hold further meetings. The plans under discussion have turned on proposals to turn the system of 'special drawing rights', the system adopted in 1969 as a method of supplementing gold and currency reserves, into a new universal system of international paper money. In reality, however, the value of 'special drawing rights' is defined by their constitution in terms of gold. The attempt to devise a world currency of paper money divorced from a commodity basis is the old illusion which has ceaselessly bumped its head against economic realities. The Committee of Twenty is still seeking its solution.

Fears of a World Slump

As the obstinate character of the contradictions of the present stage of world capitalist economy, in contrast to the parallel crisis-free advance of socialist economy and its increasing weight in the world scale, have become conspicuous in the present world situation, doubts of the immediate capitalist prospect begin to be expressed even by the most orthodox and influential spokesmen of modern capitalism. Thus the *Economist* sounded its warning on June 23:

> In the past year all countries have marched together into boom and inflation. They must watch that they do not now march down together into world slump by 1975.

By July 28 the same journal sounded this warning note with increased sharpness:

> The danger that belated and stubborn attempts to moderate inflation with old-fashioned credit cures could tip the world into recession by 1975 looks both nearer and more real.

All the signals are sounding for the need to find a new course.

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Labour's Opportunity

This is the situation which offers the highest opportunity, challenge and responsibility for the representatives of the working class and all on the left in Britain, to launch a united offensive to defeat the present reactionary policies, bring down the discredited régime of Toryism, and force an election, and in such an election rally the masses of the people for decisive economic, social and political changes. The aim of such a programme for change would need to be to end the old domination of the giant capitalist monopolies and open the path for extending popular advance leading towards the future aims of socialism alongside the increasing strength of socialism in the world today. All the indications of the present situation demonstrate this moment of opportunity. Disillusionment with the present Tory régime and the disastrous outcome of its policies is widespread. So is the wide demand for a new type of policy which breaks with the discredited policies of the past quarter of a century.

By-Election Lessons

The recent Liberal by-election victories have been a symptom, however confused, of the current of popular opinion rebelling against the limitations of the traditional forms in which the leaders of the two dominant parties are seen as running on parallel lines on so many major issues. The lesson of these recent by-elections, with the increase of the Liberal vote and decline of the Tory vote, and also of the Labour vote, is not that the official Liberal Party offers an alternative policy to that of the Tory Party. On the contrary, the policy of the Liberal Party is in fact united with that of the Tory Party on a host of issues, and most conspicuously on the key issue affecting the whole economic-political situation in Britain, the issue of Britain's adhesion to the Common Market, to which the opposition of the largest section of the British people has been repeatedly demonstrated in the polls of all the newspaper organs committed to its support, and in the latest Gallup poll has reached a majority (52 per cent). What the by-elections have shown is the desire of the electors to express their revolt against bipartisanship, that is, against the veiled alliance of the top leaders of the two main parties on so many key issues, as over Nato, Ireland or the American nuclear bases in Britain and in practice also the aim of a so-called 'incomes policy'. The lesson for the labour movement, reinforced by these by-election results, is the urgent need to end bipartisanship and mobilise support of the people for the decisive new policies which are now necessary.

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Left Advance to End Bipartisanship

The main menace which could wreck Labour's favourable opportunity in the present political situation to advance to the defeat of Toryism is the menace of bipartisanship. A sign of the practical consequence of bipartisanship is the type of comment familiar to electoral canvassers today from a not inconsiderable section of the public: 'They are all the same.' Of course this is a characteristic confusion of politically underdeveloped sections. But the extent of this confusion is also a warning. The path of political development in the conditions of Britain over the past three-quarters of a century has replaced the old two-party system of the alternation of Liberal and Tory property-owners, by the present confrontation, however incomplete yet the political expression, of two dominant parties in the new stage of the two-party system, in which one party is in fact based for its main membership, finance and strength on the organised working class, and the other is openly financed (now that the sources of finance have to be published) by all the biggest and wealthiest monopolies. The leaders on both sides seek to deny this class basis of the confrontation, since its recognition would inevitably lead to political conclusions which at present only receive full conscious expression by the Communist Party. But the Communists, so far from being a separate section from the broad labour movement, are only the conscious articulate political expression of the class outlook shared by all the fighters whose united struggle is achieving the present advance of the left.

Class Confrontation

The logic of political development today, with the present offensive of the Heath Tory government against elementary trade union rights, compels increasing recognition of the class character of this confrontation. This situation requires the fullest unity in action of all the fighting strength of the organised working class and the left, Communists and non-Communists together, in a common battle. The enemies of class unity have been revealed in the present crisis as the allies of Toryism in the Labour Party. The 69 Labour MPs who voted with the Tories for the Common Market, in defiance of official Labour policy, by their vote saved the Tory government from defeat; and this experience has since been repeated. Only this bipartisanship of alliance with Toryism, splitting Labour's ranks, could wreck the present opportunity for the defeat of Toryism.

Strategy for United Strength

Hence the essential need is to end bipartisanship and mobilise

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the fullest united strength of the whole labour movement, in common with the developing mass struggle in all its phases in industries and in localities all over the country. While present limitations exist in the political labour movement, the attempt might be made to reach agreements on electoral candidates, pending the fuller solution through recognition of the rights of the trade unions in their choice of representatives in the political labour movement, and the eventual future possibility of wider electoral agreements. The essential aim of such a mobilisation for unity would be to present to the people, not a spectacle of division, but a united army leading the fight for the decisive new advance of policy to meet the crisis. In all this the trade unions, the main basis and strength of the political labour movement, can fulfil, and will need to fulfil, a key political role.

Trade Unions' Strength and Responsibilities

The trade unions in alliance with the socialists founded the Labour Party. The Labour Party is the junior partner. This is the unique character of the development of the political labour movement in Britain in contrast to other leading European countries. In the majority of European countries the socialist parties took the lead in the constitution of a unified national centre for the trade unions; or, alternatively, the trade unions developed along their own paths independently of the political labour movement in fulfilment of the principles which eventually found formal expression in syndicalism. The distinctive character of the development in Britain has been that, just as Britain was the earliest centre of modern capitalist machine industry in the world, so the earliest development of trade unionism in modern capitalist machine industry was in Britain, and the Trades Union Congress, now entering on its more than a century-old annual session, is the oldest continuous national organisation of trade unionism in the capitalist world. This primacy of the TUC as the senior partner is vital for the understanding of the development of the labour movement in Britain. It is all the more important for the significance of the Congress which opens at Blackpool in September a month before the Labour Party Conference.

Key Political Role of the Trade Unions

It is true that in the modern period of right-wing reformist leadership in the trade union and labour movement a false conception of a kind of division of functions grew up, and even came to be regarded as traditional, according to which it was seen as the distinctive role of the trade unions and the TUC to concentrate on economic, social

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and labour questions, while leaving political questions to the parliamentarians of the Parliamentary Labour Party. But the very constitution of the Labour Party, drawing 85 per cent of its membership and the greater part of its central finances from the affiliation of the trade unions, gives the lie to this false conception. Throughout the modern period, whenever the theory of the supposed division of functions was contradicted by the real conflict of class politics in the political field, at each moment of crisis the decisive role of the trade unions and the TUC, that is, of the organised working class in action, has been demonstrated in real life, while the parliamentary party has remained in the background. So it was with the Councils of Action in 1920. So it was with Red Friday in 1925. Today more than ever the trade unions need to take on a direct political role, both through formulation of policy in the TUC in September, and through their dominant rights of participation, if actively exercised, in the proceedings and decisions of the Labour Party Conference in October.

Storm Signals

As Phase III approaches, the signs of impending storms are evident. The intensity of the barrage of rising prices and charges of every kind are shattering the sunshine pictures of Phase III as a supposed era of relaxation and rewards for the working people after the era of the freeze and of restriction. While the political endeavours of Prime Minister Heath are aimed to entangle the General Council of the TUC with the Confederation of British Industry and the government in a compact to hold off industrial conflict, the General Council right-wing majority, however eager to reach such an agreement, are uneasily aware of the anger of the workers and the preparations for action by the most powerful trade union organisation, and therefore seek to cover themselves by presenting in the negotiations a maximum programme of proposals which they know there is no chance of being accepted.

Moves for Action

Meanwhile the moves of the major forces of the organised workers for action, and in the forefront the moves of the engineers and the miners, go forward. The National Conference of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers in June adopted resolutions for 'opposition to any form of wage restraint', called on the trade union movement to 'withdraw from dealing with the government on any prices and incomes policy,' and instructed the Executive to 'build a campaign of industrial action designed to defeat the government

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and its policies of legal restrictions on the trade union movement.' A further resolution declared that 'the National Conference rejects any form of incomes policy irrespective of any government in power.' The General Secretary, Hugh Scanlon, sounded the warning that government policies

> are preparing an explosion that would make the stormy industrial events of the past two years seem only like a mild prelude. Further restraint on wages while prices rocket only stokes up the fires for the future.

The vote carried by a narrow majority of one, and democratically accepted, for the withdrawal of Scanlon from the Downing Street talks, was not on the agreed principle of opposition to the TUC talks with the government, but on the tactical question between the argument of usefulness of participation to present the left viewpoint against that of the General Council right-wing majority and the alternative argument of the danger that such participation could be interpreted as implying acceptance of the TUC talks with the government.

Significant Decisions

The Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions Conference adopted by 1,347,593 to 523,900 votes a resolution rejecting TUC talks with the government. The Transport and General Workers' Conference, while supporting the talks, presented a maximum programme for such talks, and adopted a demand for a £25 minimum basic wage. The National Union of Mineworkers' Conference adopted a wage demand for an immediate increase of £8-£13 on basic rates, with the further aim to end the depression of mining wages and reach equality with the top levels of wages in industry. The advance of militancy in the unions was further demonstrated in significant elections during this period, when Mick McGahey was elected Vice-President of the Miners, which would lead to becoming the President, by 155 votes to 126, and Ken Gill was elected General Secretary Designate of the Technical and Supervisory Section of the Engineers.

Militant Agenda

In all the 81 resolutions of the preliminary agenda of the Blackpool TUC a militant note is sounded in a number of resolutions from major organisations, calling for opposition to the government's policy of wage restraint and anti-union legislation, and in some cases calling on the General Council to end the negotiations with the government on prices and incomes policy, give support to unions

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resisting anti-union measures, and organise industrial action for the demands of the trade union movement. The resolution of the Engineering Section of the AUEW presents a comprehensive programme of the key demands of the militant trade union movement, while that of their Technical and Supervisory Section calls on Congress to 'reaffirm complete opposition to the Counter-Inflation Act and any other proposals or legislation which seek to establish statutory controls over wages and working conditions and which restrict trade union rights of free collective bargaining.' The General and Municipal Workers condemn the government's 'policies for controlling inflation' as 'unfair and unworkable', and calls for 'statutory control over key prices such as food, rent, rates, fares and fuel and a system of subsidies to make this effective.' The Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians calls on the General Council to 'withdraw from any negotiations aimed at imposing wage restraints of any kind on the trade union movement,' to 'co-ordinate industrial action within the trade union movement in support of any trade union' taking action in defiance of government wage restraint legislation, and to set up a 'TUC central fighting fund' for this purpose. The Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs condemns the Pay Board as 'a thoroughly anti-democratic intrusion into free collective bargaining and intended to act as an instrument for cutting the standards of life of British workers,' and calls on all affiliated unions to boycott its procedures.

International Outlook

Significant also is the international outlook which accompanies these expressions of resistance to the government's anti-union offensive in Britain. The National Union of Mineworkers proposes that 'Congress instructs the General Council to make every endeavour to initiate discussions with the appropriate international organisations with a view to securing international trade union unity.' The Boilermakers propose that Congress call on the General Council 'to approach all international trade union centres to give consideration to the setting up of an international liaison committee for the purpose of bringing about the eventual formation of a new world trade union international.' These proposals will be the more welcome in view of the fruitful restoration of British-Soviet trade union relations now established with the visit of the TUC delegation to the Soviet Union in response to the invitation of the Soviet trade unions (the communiqué arising from this visit is printed on p. 426), the Soviet trade union representation that may no doubt be present

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at the Blackpool Congress, and the planned return visit of a Soviet trade union delegation to Britain at a future date. With this outcome may be associated the success of the delegation of the British Labour Party under the leadership of Ian Mikardo MP to the Soviet Union (the communiqué in connection with this visit is printed on p. 428), the whole representing a progressive development in the cause of friendly British-Soviet and international working class co-operation.

A Call to Action

The clearest, most concise and practical call to action, corresponding to the viewpoint of the widest sections of the militant trade union movement, is expressed in the resolution presented by the Engineering Section of the AUEW, and constituting the sole resolution in Section II of the agenda on 'Industrial Relations'. This resolution is so effective an expression of a programme of action for the whole trade union movement that it may be useful, since the general press has only reproduced extracts, to give readers the full text:

> Congress calls for a policy of non-co-operation and total opposition to all aspects of the Industrial Relations Act, including a refusal to appear before, or be represented at, the NIRC (National Industrial Relations Court).
>
> To this end the General Council is instructed to set up a common fund to ensure that any union prevented from functioning by sequestration shall fully maintain its activities.
>
> Congress instructs the General Council to call upon the next Labour government to repeal the Act, and to ensure that any prosecutions or fines imposed under the Act be quashed, and any monies sequestered by the NIRC from trade unions be returned in full, with interest, by those who brought the prosecution.
>
> The General Council is also instructed to continue opposing any form of wage restraint and to call upon the whole trade union movement to withdraw from dealing with the government on any prices and incomes policy.
>
> In furtherance of these aims, the General Council is instructed to initiate mass action on as wide a front as possible, including mass meetings throughout the country to generate support, to mobilise the whole trade union movement in concerted acts of defiance, and to support by all means, including industrial action and financial help, any union or trade unionist penalised under the Act, and to build a campaign of industrial action designed to defeat the government and its policies of legal restriction on the trade union movement.
>
> Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Engineering Section)

In the medley of proceedings of a Congress, with the familiar hazards of the complex process of 'compositing', no prediction can be ventured on the eventual fate of this resolution of the Engineers. But it is to be hoped that it will be carried by the Blackpool Congress.

R.P.D.

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LABOUR'S PROGRAMME 1973

John Forrester*
Divisional Organiser
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
Technical and Supervisory Section

LABOUR'S Programme 1973 contains, as a previous contributor to this series stated, both shadow and substance (*LM*, July 1973). All long-term political programmes are likely to do this. Nevertheless, there is infinitely more substance in the new programme than I can recall in any previous programme. The substance contained in the programme is a response to grass roots pressure since the defeat of the last Labour government in 1970. If the programme is accepted by the 1973 Labour Party Conference and, more problematically, by the Parliamentary Labour Party, then I believe that what is known as the credibility gap between the Party and its natural supporters will close considerably. Consequently, it requires continuous grass roots pressure from both the industrial and political wings of the movement to ensure that the manifesto on which the next election will be fought contains the maximum of substance from the Programme. The movement must insist that élitism no longer controls the Party. Constituency Labour Parties should be having meetings with their Labour MPs or adopted candidates to ascertain precisely where he or she stands in relation to the Programme.

In the last few years capitalism has been exposed more clearly to the man in the street than at any previous period in history. He is more conscious today of its injustices, inefficiencies and corruptions than at any previous time. Even the Heath government recognises this fact and is desperately seeking a cosmetic to cover the unpleasant face. Labour will win the next election primarily because the great mass of the British people have become increasingly conscious of the deep inequalities that pervade our society. But the policies of the next Labour government will require to be relevant in dealing with these inequalities.

The last 25 years have seen considerable effort by the Labour Party to build a society with laudable social objectives in education, health, pensions and maintenance of the underprivileged. There can be no one who feels that success has been achieved in respect of these

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objectives. Reliance entirely on fiscal policy to finance social welfare has frustrated the best social objectives. There is a limit to the level of taxation which can be levied on privately-owned capital, beyond which one creates a disincentive to produce economic growth.

This is why I consider that the most important statement contained in Labour's Programme 1973 is to be found in section 5: 'If the causes of inequality are to be attacked at their roots, economic power must be transferred from a small élite to the mass of the people.' This represents a substantial change in Labour Party thinking. Throughout the last 30 years the sole criterion for public ownership has been efficiency. An efficient industrial society is important but it is naïve to believe that the rewards from an efficient society rub off on the real producers of the nation's wealth. Indeed, I have always considered this criterion offensive, because in essence it means that the nation can acquire the derelicts, whilst private ownership retains the more prosperous sections of the economy.

Inequalities in British society are the direct consequence of private ownership of the nation's means of producing wealth, the minority being allowed to control the wealth produced by the great majority. The next Labour government will stand or fall on its ability to redress the imbalance in wealth ownership in British society. Labour's Programme 1973 recognises that this cannot be achieved without a substantial increase in the public sector. It is equally important that the increase in the public sector is not confined solely to industries which have a low profit yield. This is why the proposal to make inroads into the top 100 companies is so important as a contribution towards greater equality in our society. The development of an egalitarian society requires that the surplus value created by labour becomes the property of the whole nation. Only in such circumstances can the nation's wealth be effectively directed into producing the social welfare so desperately required by the underprivileged and elderly in our society.

In addition to the acceptance that ownership is relevant to equality, Labour's Programme 1973 contends that only direct control, through ownership, will allow a future Labour government to achieve its essential planning objectives. This reveals at least an ability to learn from experience. One of the more offensive aspects of life during the period of the last Labour government was the conduct of some of the major industrial mergers in this country. After having their bowl filled at the door of the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, they proceeded to carry out massive rationalisation policies without any regard to the social consequences. Redundancies were

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heaviest in the very regions which the Labour government was most anxiously seeking to help by offering financial inducements to industry to develop within these regions. Such successes as that government had in providing jobs through public assistance was being eroded by the conduct of the mergers who were also the recipients of state aid. This must not be repeated. A vigorous regional policy must be a major responsibility of the next Labour government. The ability to carry out such a policy must not be frustrated by lack of control. Control springs from ownership, not from financial incentive or from exhortation.

Labour's Programme 1973 does refer to serious power concentrations within a diminishing number of hands. But in my view it does not stress this danger sufficiently. Instinctively the British people are becoming more and more conscious of the fact that many of the major decisions which affect their lives are being taken in the board rooms of the major financial and industrial consortia. Naturally, these decisions are taken purely on the basis of the force which motivates the system, profit. The private interest of the capitalist rarely coincides with the national interest and the welfare of our people. Those of us who work for the return of a Labour government are not impressed when we are told in memoirs six years after the event that a Labour government was informed by a banker that if it pursued a particular policy it would face a flight of capital. We elect a Labour government because we want that government to control our society. When that government is inhibited by financial interests from carrying its policies into effect, we expect a socialist response. The capital assets of this nation were created by generations of working people. They should not be the property of a small élite within our society.

Labour's Programme 1973 contains massive social policies which, if put into operation, would revolutionise the lives of the British people. But the key issue in the whole programme must be the proposals to extend public ownership across a very broad area of financial and industrial power. Without a preparedness on the part of the Parliamentary Labour Party to implement the public ownership proposals, the social proposals contained in the programme will be illusory. This is why grass roots pressure on this aspect is vital; the movement cannot allow a parliamentary veto. It is also important that our propaganda should be directed to repairing the damage which has been done to the image of public ownership. This is a task which has been neglected for far too long by the labour movement.

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ALLEN HUTT

September 20, 1901-August 10, 1973

Many flags will be dipped in salute to Allen Hutt—G.A.H.—who for over 50 years devoted his great talents and enormous energy to the working class movement. *Labour Monthly* mourns his passing as one of its earliest, most steadfast friends and contributors. From his first article in May 1923 he considered himself 'on call' to *LM*.

As journalist, author, typographer, trade unionist—above all as Marxist—he made a lasting impact, aiding the political development of successive generations, imprinting his style on the young mass working class press (*Daily Herald, Workers' Weekly, Sunday Worker, Reynolds News, Daily Worker*), and not least penning terse, incisive analyses of events in Britain and abroad for this and other journals.

A tenacious internationalist, firm protagonist of the socialist world, he was a master of the British political, trade union and economic scene, writing: *British Trade Unionism: a short history*; *The Condition of the Working Class in Britain*; *This Final Crisis*; and *The Post-War History of the British Working Class.*

Allen Hutt won world-wide fame as a master craftsman in the field of newspaper typography, his work *Newspaper Design* allying his skill as a working journalist with his overall philosophical approach. He was the only journalist to be named a Royal Designer for Industry. But professionalism was for him never an arid exercise, nor related to 'pelf and place', but the view that a Communist's mastery of his craft is an expression of pride in his politics and a means of better serving the movement.

Allen Hutt was a fighter—a man who lived his life on the attack. He did so with the greatest good humour, a pungent wit and a huge enjoyment of life. *Labour Monthly* pays tribute to a pen laid to rest and offers condolences to his wife Avis and his family.

Alan Brown

His contributions to *Labour Monthly* include: *Egyptian Nationalism and the Class Struggle* (1923), *The Counter-Revolution in Europe* (1923), *'Democracy' in the Scottish Miners' Union* (1928), *Coal, Charity and the Class Struggle* (1929), *'Preparedness' in the Border States* (1930), *Social Democracy and War on the Soviet Union* (1931), *'Disarmament' and the Coming War* (1931), *The Congress of Vienna* (1931), *A Vital Sphere of Leninist Theory* (1932), *Tom Mann* (1936), *Purge in the Trade Unions?* (1937), *Labour and the Cripps Campaign* (1939), *The Great French Revolution* (1939), *Before the Labour Party Conference* (1940), *Production—Key to Victory* (1941), *Notes of a Patriot* (1942), *Organisers of Victory* (1942), *Ceux de Valmy: 1792-1942* (1942), *Dona Torr* (1957), *Morris, Marxism and Typography* (1957), *The Press in Election Year* (1964), *Press Problems of the Labour Movement* (1966), *The Truth About* The Times (1966) and *The TUC's Centenary* (1968).

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FORMULATING LABOUR'S PROGRAMME

Norman Atkinson MP

GOSSIP journalists have often pondered how the Queen herself must have felt when she opened each new session of parliament during the period of Labour government. Did she think the policies would work—for instance? It always struck me as being a somewhat bizarre situation. She would start off by saying: 'My husband and I are delighted . . .' and then go on to spell out with the coolest detachment some item of policy which previously had convulsed the labour movement.

Of course, even today it may still be equally embarrassing. If she ever spends a quiet moment or two at Windsor looking back over some of the policies she has announced on behalf of Edward Heath, I am sure she will blush just a little.

Bearing in mind the recent record of the Heath administration, it would perhaps be a good idea if the Queen herself not only opened each session of parliament but also prorogued them. If she, and not Lord Hailsham, had made the last two winding-up statements she would have had to start maybe by admitting: 'My husband and I have been looking back over the last 12 months and are acutely aware that the stuff we announced last year has flopped. Philip and I are delighted that our Ministers have at last had the good sense to alter the whole thing and pursue totally different economic policies.' At least it would bring a sense of reality to the whole thing*.

The importance of the Queen's Speech to the wider labour movement is what it contains. It is a crucial question. Ostensibly it is the Prime Minister and one or two leading members of the Cabinet who decide which items go in. The decision is taken at the beginning of each session which usually lasts about 12 months. There are no rules to say that it should last so long, but, because all legislation automatically falls if it is not completed by the end of the session, all governments have felt that it is to their advantage to have a clearing-up once a year.

Obviously the life of a government and the number of sessions it plans depends upon its majority. In 1964 the Labour government

* Each parliamentary session is 'constitutionally' required to be both opened and closed by the Queen. In reality, however, the Queen never in person delivers the closing speech. Probably she never sees a copy. It is given on her behalf by the Lord Chancellor, usually with very few people present.

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had at the beginning an effective majority of five which tragically disappeared very quickly. In consequence it not only reduced the life of the government to 18 months but it also gave Prime Minister Harold Wilson enormous power, not only in the selection of the 1965 programme but also in the formulation of Labour's 1966 election manifesto.

The significance of this can never be over-stressed, especially when one considers that only half of the policies currently being discussed and published in the labour movement will actually be included in the 1974 election manifesto. And, if a Labour government is elected, only half of what is in the manifesto will get into the parliamentary programme selected by the Prime Minister and Cabinet committee and later announced by the Queen.

It is this aspect of policy making which is hardly discussed, yet the question of priorities is probably more important than the content of the actual manifesto. In fact, the labour movement as a whole should have the right to list its own order of preferences to prevent the dropping of issues the majority consider essential. A typical example in recent times was the unanimous demand of the 1968 Conference calling for the complete restoration of a free Health service. Somehow it was subsequently dropped from Labour's programme altogether yet it clearly represented the wish of the whole movement.

The remedy lies with the National Executive Committee, and the Party should make known its priorities and insist that the parliamentary leadership respects its wishes. The point is, before a political commitment appears in the government's worksheet it has to survive a long and complex journey. And it is precisely because there are so many eliminations made on the personal judgement of an individual leader that the selection of personalities is almost equal to that of policies. The three *p*s—policies, priorities and personalities—are of deep significance for the whole movement.

It is an absolute necessity in my view for the labour movement to study these things very carefully indeed so as to avoid the very purpose of our political activity being frustrated. Even then the system may not be straightforward. Some Labour MPs argue that they are not bound by decisions taken at Annual Conference. They say as both the *Times* and the *Guardian* have recently said in the controversy about Dick Taverne, that an MP must be free to make up his own mind. But they forget that all MPs are surely obliged both by their own morality and electoral honesty to accept and carry out a manifesto upon which they were elected. In the case of

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the Labour Party, all items in its manifesto must at some time have been endorsed by at least a two-thirds majority of those voting at Annual Conference.

Surely an elector prefers to vote for one candidate and not another precisely because the elector wishes to support a particular policy. Under such circumstances how can an MP claim the right to please himself how he votes and yet remain true to those who elected him?

In my opinion it is dishonest for a Labour candidate to run on a Party ticket and then afterwards claim that the majority of his supporters share his personal reservations about the Labour programme. Yet that is precisely what Wyatt and Donnelly claimed in regard to their rejection of the public ownership of steel during the 1964 government. And again during the 1966 government the same argument was advanced by those voting against the Labour Party in favour of Britain applying for membership of the EEC on any terms. And before the editor of *Socialist Commentary* foams about the behaviour of the *Tribune* left, during Labour's period in office let me assure him that never throughout the period did the left vote against a Conference decision—and that includes left votes on the prices and incomes policy.

Looking back over the last few years the failure of successive Labour governments to carry out the kind of socialist policies envisaged by Annual Conference has largely, in my view, been a matter of the movement's reluctance to elect leaders who are in harmony with the policy. The reason may be that totally different sections of the movement are involved in the endorsement of policies from those which elect leaders. The policy of the Party is determined by the whole Conference recording a vote, whilst its National Executive Committee is elected by different sections. The trade unions elect their own people and the constituency Labour Parties do likewise. Only the five women members of the NEC and the Treasurer are elected by the whole Conference. The election of the Party leader and deputy leader, however, is quite different: as with the Shadow Cabinet, only Labour MPs can vote. In my view the whole Conference should elect the leader of the Party and the position of deputy leader should be discontinued. It is unnecessary to duplicate the office, and it was only created in 1952 for the purpose of getting Herbert Morrison back on to the NEC after his defeat at the Morecambe Conference.

Just prior to each general election the NEC and the Shadow Cabinet meet together to assemble the Party manifesto. Because some MPs are members of both committees, the combined number

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of members is about 32. Oddly enough—and judging only by their public utterances—it would seem that less than half of them actually give support to the more controversial policies issued by the NEC, namely those policies calling for the public ownership of the banks and insurance companies, together with the taking-over of some leading pace-setters among British manufacturers. In other words, unless there is a massive campaign throughout the movement pressing hard for the inclusion of these policies in the next Labour government's programme, none of them have even the remotest chance of surviving the vetters strategically placed right down the line.

In my opinion the labour movement really must face up to its responsibility as a socialist force. It cannot wallow for ever in the sound of its own militant advocacy of Clause IV yet not bring in the legislation required. It cannot go on talking socialism without making great inroads into existing capitalist society.

The movement itself must be alerted to the need to do certain things as a matter of some urgency this year. It must be ever vigilant at all levels of activity and must insist on the right not only to endorse policies but also to decide their priority. It must have the right to elect the leader of the Party and to debate the Annual Parliamentary Report presented by the leader to Conference. It must pay special attention to securing the election of NEC members who support Conference decisions and are willing to put through the necessary legislation. If it does these things then I believe we will not only win back political credibility but be equipped as a socialist movement rapidly to make great strides towards our kind of society.

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No. 54 Third Quarter 1973 15p
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WALTER ULBRICHT

June 30, 1893-August 1, 1973

Jack Cohen

THERE was no mistaking the cold-war flavour of the press reaction to the news of Walter Ulbricht's death. The attitudes expressed both to the man and to his country, the German Democratic Republic, epitomise the reasons for a long-running press campaign of the greatest animosity. What are these reasons?

The policy of the capitalist countries, of the Nato powers, has been to exclude and isolate the GDR in every way, economically, politically and in all fields of normal contact between peoples. The notorious Hallstein doctrine carried this much further than a simple refusal of diplomatic relations. The GDR has consistently been presented as grey, prison-like and gloomy, the chief comparison being with a German Federal Republic presented as a modern go-ahead country.

Now that the GDR has emerged as the fifth industrial country of Europe, and indeed ninth in the world, this policy has come unstuck. That such an advance has been made, in an area which was the backward agrarian part of pre-war Germany, is the greatest tribute to the people of the GDR. Economic, social and industrial comparisons with the most advanced countries of the world are now made which would have been inconceivable 25 years ago, given that all the major centres of German industrialism lay in western Germany and that these were fed by massive post-war injections of US dollar aid.

Today 90 countries have established diplomatic relations with the GDR; in the case of the capitalist governments this indicates no change of heart but has been forced on them by the very success of the GDR and as a result of the steady and principled support of the other socialist countries.

Walter Ulbricht's name has been linked with all these developments, and the position today marks the crowning achievement of his life which always had the socialist advance of the German people as his aim. He came from a working class background, having been apprenticed to a cabinet maker in his youth. He joined the Woodworkers' Union and the Socialist Youth Movement (SAJ), and later the Social-Democratic Party, all during his teens. In the SDP he was with the left socialist forces active against the rise of

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German militarism and imperialism, and then in the opposition to the first world war, opposing in particular the voting of the War Credits by the Reichstag fraction of the SDP.

He was called up into the army; and the October revolution, which he was quick to welcome, took place while he was serving. He was active in the German revolution in 1918 as a member of the Leipzig Workers' and Soldiers' Council. In 1919 he became a foundation member of the German Communist Party (KPD) and later was elected to the Central Committee; he held many responsible positions, especially as Secretary of the very important Berlin-Brandenburg organisation. He was elected during the period of the Weimar Republic as a Communist MP to the Prussian Landtag (provincial parliament) and to the Reichstag.

Ulbricht worked with Thaelman to build the vitally necessary unity between the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties against the Nazis. After the Nazis came to power he was for a time engaged in illegal work in the German underground, but by decision of the Party left the country and was in the Soviet Union during the second world war where he worked on several fronts, notably in Stalingrad, broadcasting to the German troops.

After the war he played a leading part in establishing the Socialist Unity Party of Germany; in 1946 the long-sought unity this represented became a reality in the area which was then the Soviet Zone, though unity in the rest of Germany was not to be achieved. His subsequent role in leading government and Party positions in the GDR is well known to readers of *Labour Monthly*.

Walter Ulbricht celebrated his eightieth birthday this year and lived to see the start of the tenth World Youth Festival. Nothing could have been more pleasing to him than to witness this event bringing young people together from all over the world in Berlin as guests of the Free German Youth, their living achievement for all to see—a socialist Germany.

TGWU DELEGATE

In conclusion, Mr Chairman, 'I believe this planet does not belong to us. As many speakers have said, we hold it in trust for our children, and they will not easily forgive us if we leave them with a world full of sludge, smog, chemicals and Tories.' **A delegate speaking on Pollution.**

(From the Transport and General Workers' Union *Record*, August 1973)

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TENTH WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL

Digby Jacks
President*
National Union of Students

RETURNING to London at the end of the tenth World Youth Festival, in Berlin, capital of the GDR, I was shocked at the press coverage this very important event received in Britain. The *Guardian* talked of a 'festival of order', the *Sunday Telegraph* of the 'Youth Rally Crisis for E Germany', the *Daily Telegraph*—'East Berlin snubs Israeli Communists' and the *Observer* about whether East Germany was 'liberalising in tiny doses or not'. With the notable exception of the *Morning Star*, I have seen no coverage in the British press of the three slogans of the Festival: peace, friendship and anti-imperialist solidarity. This is a shocking indictment. Having participated in the event I am more than usually surprised at the extent to which our press will distort, fabricate and magnify insignificant detail for their own purpose which certainly doesn't in this instance involve telling the truth. One also wonders whether correspondents in Berlin actually noticed what was going on and whether their newspapers are getting their money's worth.

The festival was a truly magnificent display of the strength and purpose of the progressive youth of the world. It contributed significantly towards the achieving of the objectives of the three main slogans. The British delegation had many opportunities to meet, discuss with and demonstrate alongside youth and students of almost every other country in the world.

It was generally noted that contingents from West European countries were bigger and more representative than they had been for many years. For our part, every section of organised British youth, with the exception of the Young Conservatives, was represented. Particularly important was the high proportion of trade union and student union delegates present—making it far more effective in Berlin and on return than if it had been composed of a relatively higher proportion of individuals. Indeed, this was the first time for many years that the NUS and student unions have been involved in the festival movement.

The festival's ten-day programme was enormously varied. There

* 1972-73

(*continued on page 410*)

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BERLIN 1

The 1973 World Youth Festival—*above*: 'Fight for Peace' rally in Berlin, and *below*: Vo Thi Lin (centre), the girl from My Lai, in the delegation from South Vietnam.

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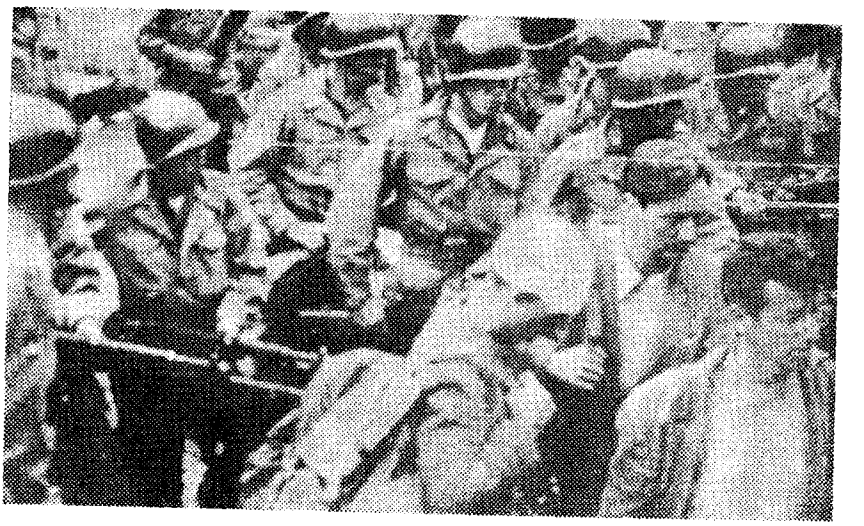
and 1951



Journeying to the 1951 Festival tested the courage of some participants. British delegates going through the American Zone of Austria met GI brutality (above). Their reports were published in a 26-page pamphlet, *The Innsbruck Story*. The GIs 'left us in no doubt that the "American Century" was to be established by conquest.' The West German contingent had to get across the border (below): three were killed by West Zone police bullets and many were injured. But thousands got to Berlin and experienced the contrast of the Third World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace.

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(*continued from page 407*)

was a special trade union oriented section, a programme specifically for students, solidarity events for liberation struggles in southern Africa, with the Irish people, most particularly the heroic Vietnamese and many others including the problems of youth and students in Western capitalist countries. It was also highly educative for all to sample the best of numerous national cultures and to engage in the discussion this provoked.

Some might say that the festival was all about 'us', that is to say the 'better off' or 'freer' youth movements, giving support and help to our less experienced and fortunate brethren in Africa, Asia and Latin America or even the socialist countries! This could not be further from the truth. A festival of this sort makes us realise the profound extent to which we are engaged in a joint struggle. It is the same monopolies backing racist South Africa, and colonialist exploitation in the Portuguese colonies, that undermine the democracy within our universities and colleges. Angela Davis embracing the lone survivor of the My Lai massacre, and so much more, emphasises that solidarity in struggle is about *mutual* support, a support which strengthens the struggle of all. Specifically for the NUS the festival provided manifold opportunities for student delegates to meet with and discuss problems and activities with other national unions of students, to tell many of our own activities, to plan future actions with other bodies and to strengthen the interest of our own membership in international affairs. To meet face to face those actually fighting in South Africa and Vietnam taught us all much. To be personally acquainted with those whom previously one had only read about adds a powerful dimension to political involvement.

Of course, there were problems—the sheer size of the event—planning and catering for 30,000 visitors and a much larger contingent of the Free German Youth (FDJ) was bound to cause some difficulty for our hosts in Berlin. There were some difficulties of the same sort on our own delegation of 400 (a very large one by the standards of recent festivals), for which all the arrangements were catered for prior to departure by one full time organiser and a part time committee. And indeed, with the political breadth of the festival, discussion was bound to become heated at times. Nevertheless the highest praise must go to the GDR government, the Berlin civic authorities and the FDJ.

Festival participants were truly treated as guests and given a very high standard of hospitality. The whole of the centre of Berlin was

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given over to the festival, and traffic was banned from this area. Those that know Berlin will realise that *die Mitte* is the prestige central development of socialist town planning. Through this and other actions it was possible for the socialist GDR to give its best to the festival. In passing one must say that the standard of living and quality of life is very high in the GDR and that the FDJ organises and leads the majority of youth in a democratic and fighting manner. Paradoxically to me, perhaps, West Berlin looked very drab on the other side of the wall.

The festival was last held in Berlin in 1951. Then the festival was smaller, conditions in Berlin were more difficult and the cold war policies and actions of the West hampered participation considerably. Twenty-two years later, with the forces of socialism and national liberation so much stronger, and East-West relations improved, the festival demonstrated how much has been achieved—and what more needs to be done.

This festival will take our activities in Britain a stage forward. The co-operation, contacts and friendships engendered, and for the NUS particularly those between students and trade unionists, make it easier for us to solve the problems that face us. A broad and powerful anti-imperialist event is hardly likely to receive a favourable coverage in the British news media. Corsetted and cossetted expense account journalists may have their minds and senses dulled (or in this case may not have ventured from the dinner table out into the Alexanderplatz) but the reality of the situation cannot be falsified. To have our efforts sneered at by the media and its poodles tells us what our society is like and how much it must be changed. It must galvanise us into action.

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WILLIAM ZAK

December 22, 1907-August 11, 1973

The loss of William Zak will be felt deeply by all.

Bill Zak's activity during his long membership of the Communist Party and the Furnishing Trades Union covered many fields. He was always deeply concerned with the fight against imperialism and war, and from 1951 played a foremost role in winning support in this country for the national struggle of the Vietnamese people. He was active in promoting trade union internationalism, utilising his contacts with and knowledge of France and Belgium. He was appointed to the Union's delegation to the Soviet Union in 1962 and maintained the fruitful contact then established with his Soviet colleagues.

His ability and devotion as a full-time union official alongside a constant fight for progressive policies within the Union won him the affection and respect of the membership which elected him as delegate to the TUC for more than 30 years.

As well as articles in *Labour Monthly*, including *The Strike of the Belgian Miners* (1932) and *A Decisive Step to World Trade Union Unity* (1935), he contributed articles on a variety of subjects to Communist and other progressive journals. As editor of the monthly journal of his trade union he was engaged in preparing the current issue within hours of his death.

Hilda Vernon

PAT DEVINE

November 22, 1898-July 22, 1973

Labour Monthly joins with all spokesmen of the working class, democratic and anti-imperialist movement in Britain, Ireland, the United States and countries all over the world in mourning the loss of one of the most outstanding champions of the cause of the working people and the oppressed everywhere for nearly six decades, indomitable fighter and leader of mass struggles, brilliant orator, and exuberant and dearly loved personality and friend, Pat Devine. It is characteristic of the unique range of his activity that he served on the Executive Committees of the Communist Parties in Britain, Ireland and the United States. He was a most valued friend of our journal, and his contributions reflected the range of his activity. On the battles of the unemployed he wrote *The Struggle of the Unemployed* (1932) and *The Unemployed* (1937). On Ireland he wrote *Easter Week 1916* (1936) and *Ireland's Fight for Freedom* (1937). On the United States he wrote *The American Labour Scene* (1937). His work has been inseparably associated with Gloria Devine, to whom, as to his family, our journal expresses full sympathy and understanding. The inspiration he has given us lives on.

R.P.D.

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TERRORISM—SOME PLAIN WORDS

Andrew Rothstein

SEVENTY years ago, preparing for the historic second congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party, Lenin drafted the following resolution on terrorism; it was never reached because of the other vast discussions at the Congress:

> The Congress decisively rejects terrorism, i.e. the system of individual political assassinations, as being a method of political struggle which is most inexpedient at the present time, diverting the best forces from the urgent and imperatively necessary work of organisation and agitation, destroying contact between the revolutionaries and the masses of the revolutionary classes of the population, and spreading both among the revolutionaries themselves and the population in general utterly distorted ideas of the aims and methods of struggle against the autocracy.

This was no sudden or fleeting thought of the great revolutionary leader. Ever since the 1870s, revolutionary intellectuals had displayed marvels of heroism and self-sacrifice, as well as of stubborn persistence and painstaking ingenuity, in attacking tsardom through its leading representatives by terrorist methods. In 1878 Stepniak-Kravchinsky killed Mezentsev, chief of the gendarmerie, in broad daylight, with a dagger. In 1881 the 'People's Will' organisation killed Alexander II with a bomb. These and other acts made the Russian terrorists famous throughout the world.

And yet their declared aims of forcing the tsardom to make concessions in its régime (out of fear of the consequences if it refused), of gradually wrecking the tsarist machinery of repression by destroying its chief functionaries and of arousing the oppressed masses by the force of example had not been achieved. More, tsardom had reinforced its own terror and, it must not be forgotten, had, from the early nineties, secured massive financial help from French, German and ultimately British investors and governments enabling it to carry on against the revolutionaries.

The first Russian Social-Democratic paper, *Iskra*, had already spoken out against these tactics. Lenin had written in his article of 1901, 'Where to Begin?', that they were 'untimely and inexpedient . . . distracting the most active fighters from their real, most important task in the interests of the whole movement, and disorganising not

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the government forces but those of the revolutionaries.' In *What Is To Be Done?*, the following year, he wrote that essentially the use of such a weapon was the work of people, full of indignation against tsardom, who however either 'had lost faith in the working class movement, or had never believed in it.' Only the kind of force which the masses would use was what Social-Democrats should aim at preparing, he said in his article 'Revolutionary Adventurism', later in 1902. And, still in that year, he wrote:

> We consider that a hundred assassinations of tsars will never have such a rousing and educative effect as this one participation of tens of thousands of working people [he was referring to an unprecedented strike at Rostov-on-Don] in meetings which discuss their vital interests and the connection of politics with those interests, as this participation in a struggle which genuinely *raises* ever new 'untouched' strata of the proletariat to a more class-conscious life and to wider revolutionary struggles.

On many more occasions, after the second congress as before it, Lenin drove home this point again and again, combating the belief of the latter-day successors of the nineteenth-century terrorists—the Socialist-Revolutionaries—in the effectiveness of what they called 'revolutionary terror'.

Who proved right in this debate, which took up not a little time and energy of the revolutionary movement in Russia, at least up to 1914? It was not the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who found themselves in the camp of the Allied, i.e. tsarist, warmongers in 1914-17, backed Kerensky in the struggle against the Bolsheviks in that revolutionary year, and finished up in the camp of the imperialist invaders of Soviet Russia, as their allies and tools in fact, during the years 1918-25. It was the Bolsheviks led by Lenin, with their invincible faith in the working class and its destinies, who headed that class in the October revolution which was to put an end not only to the peril of a tsarist restoration in Russia but to capitalism there itself.

Revolutionary Social-Democrats everywhere in those years condemned the tactics of individual terrorist acts as being in essence the last resort of despairing middle class intellectuals (whatever individual workers or peasants temporarily fell under their influence) who had no faith in the working class or its historic destiny set forth by Marx and Engels and their followers—to use its one great weapon of *organisation* in order to overthrow in the end the whole capitalist system including its ruling classes, take charge of society and remould it into socialism.

This did not mean that in a period of mass upheaval, whether for

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a social revolution or for the overthrow of national oppression, when the ruling classes and governments were using terror on a large scale themselves, Marxists ever condemned mass counter-terror by the workers and other oppressed. During the revolutionary years of 1905-6 in Russia, the Marxists supported to the full partisan warfare of every kind—denounced as 'terrorism' by the workers' enemies—and urged its extension. When the Irish people in 1919-21 were fighting their heroic partisan struggle against the war conducted against them by the British army, police and 'Black-and-Tan' thugs, neither Marxists nor other honest socialists were deterred in supporting them by the denunciations of the Irish patriots by politicians and millionaire newspapers as 'terrorists'. During the second world war, the name of 'terrorists' was regularly applied by the Nazis to the thousands of resistance fighters who used every device they could to kill the invaders of their countries—whether in France or Yugoslavia, in the Soviet Union or Italy or elsewhere. And when British imperialism, administered by a right-wing Labour government, had begun open war in 1948 against the working people of Malaya, led by the organised workers and the Communist Party of Malaya, the stubborn struggle for national liberation was also denounced as the work of 'terrorists' by the reptile press and politicians in Britain and other capitalist countries—but this did not hide from the working class movement here and abroad that the Malayan partisan armies were waging a legitimate war of self-defence.

Today the question of terrorism has come up again in a new form.

Most socialists understand that world imperialism has been dealt a decisive blow by the extension of the socialist group of countries in 1944-49, by the failure of Hitler to destroy the Soviet Union and of Western imperialism subsequently to bring it to its knees, and by the political liberation as a result of these events of scores of former colonial countries. There is increasing sympathy with the continuing efforts of the Arab peoples to resist the aggressive policies of the latter-day 'pocket imperialism' of Israel, backed by the United States and the finance of international Zionism. There is worldwide sympathy, too, with the people of Northern Ireland, against whom British imperialism, having 50 years ago successfully practised its traditional policy of 'divide and rule', by partitioning Ireland, has now resorted to the same diabolical means to set brother against brother, and thrown in the forces of the British army to make sure that the process continues.

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In both situations the imperialist aggressors are being *helped* by a reappearance of the old tactics of individual terror, in a new and even more hopeless form.

That every provocation and terrorist method should be used by the agents of United States imperialism who rule Israel, just as their predecessors the tsarist gendarmes and the 'Black Hundreds' did against revolutionaries and subject peoples (including the Jews) in the Russian empire, is understandable. That the same should be the case, allowing for different circumstances, in the Six Counties—but above all bearing in mind the 50 years of police rule and fanatical Orange propaganda against the Catholic minority—is equally in the nature of the beast. What is a glaring fact in both cases is that some (not all) of the patriotic forces have reverted to the utterly bankrupt tactics of the old Russian terrorist intellectuals, and in a peculiarly damaging and senseless form, against all the lessons of experience of national struggles.

The Arab peoples outside Israel have the inestimable advantage—which the old Russian revolutionaries lacked—of independent organised states to defend them. To reinforce the military (and not only the military) strength of these states, against all possible aggression, above all to make their peoples feel that the states exist for *them*, the working people, and to come effectively to the aid of any among them who is attacked, is an obvious necessity. So is the forming, strengthening and uniting of every kind of underground organisation in the occupied territories able to organise the countering of attacks by the aggressor, in whatever form. In these activities the support of the socialist countries has for years been available to them (subject to its not being rejected by pigheaded fanaticism). And on the whole they have the sympathy of the majority of working people throughout the capitalist world as well, as shown by the general support shown for the United Nations resolution of 1967 requiring Israel to evacuate the territories seized by military aggression.

But the kind of terrorism which wantonly kills innocent people—whether by bombs thrown in crowded shops and offices, by the massacre of sportsmen at the Olympic Games, or in the course of hijacking aircraft—does absolutely nothing to win the sympathy of the working people in other countries, particularly the organised workers who have the greatest power to exercise pressure in the imperialist countries (not to speak of the growing opposition in Israel itself): on the contrary, it alienates them, without 'frightening' the imperialists or their Israeli agents into making concessions, or

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'hindering' the working of their apparatus of aggression, or 'impressing the world' with the despair of the terrorists. These *self-deceptions* by people who blind themselves to the lessons of history and of political experience are as counter-productive as were the similar self-deceptions of the Russian terrorists (who, by the way, did take care wherever possible to warn off possible companions of those they were planning to kill, as in the well-known case of the Grand Duke Sergei, Governor-General of Moscow, in 1905).

The same energies devoted to organising support in other countries —even on the scale adopted by the Zionist propagandists—*side by side* with the activities underground and in the Arab states, would beyond doubt produce tangible results.

Even more does this logic apply in the case of Northern Ireland. For there the Irish patriots are not fighting in a far-off country, remote from the experience of British workers. On the contrary, during the 1913 Dublin strike in a small way, in 1919 and 1920 during the Irish War of Independence on a much larger scale, experience has shown that the active support of British organised labour in pressure on its own government could be won, at times when the British workers were far less politically angry, aware and active than they are today. Moreover, recent articles in this journal by Irish militants have reminded us that Irish trade unionism is a powerful force across all the borders, while in Northern Ireland itself there have been a number of initiatives to promote a non-sectarian trend of discussion and activity, which have been the target of special hostility from the fanatical Orange side.

In these conditions, for a section of the Irish patriots to permit themselves the kind of act which is evidently based on the theory that 'the worse things get, the better'—that, by provoking increased repressions from the British side and from the Orange murder gang and that of their allies, they can unite the Irish side more effectively —is once again to repeat, even though with different arguments, the self-deceptions of the old Russian terrorists. Throwing bombs without discrimination into crowded shops or other places where ordinary workers gather, or shooting persons selected only because they will serve as a symbol of reprisal, without their actually being connected with the forces of the national enemy (or his agents), helps the enemies of civil rights in Northern Ireland and the enemies of Irish unity in freedom, by pushing away the advocates of working class unity against those enemies, both in Ireland and in Britain.

This waste of precious energies, this self-stultification, cannot but arouse serious concern.

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THE MUNICH DRAMA (12)

I. M. Maisky

(In this final instalment, Academician Maisky tells of the reaction in Britain to Munich, of the final rape of Czechoslovakia, and sums up the historic drama—Ed. *LM)*

HOW did Britain react to Munich? On the first day there was a general sigh of relief: there would not be war, bombs would not drop, Chamberlain was the saviour of the nation; his residence in Downing Street was strewn with bouquets from all over Britain. The House of Commons endorsed the Munich agreements by 366 to 144; supporters of the Prime Minister who had been wavering again acquired confidence in their leader—the best example being Halifax, who now lapsed into a state of some optimistic rapture. Among the documents seized by the Soviet Army in Germany, there is a record of a talk between Herbert von Dirksen, German Ambassador in London, and Halifax on August 9, 1939. Halifax said that 'after Munich he was convinced that world peace was secure for 50 years' (*Documents and Materials from the Eve of the Second World War*, Moscow, 1948, Vol 2, p 146).

On the very next day, however, the mood began to change. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Duff Cooper, resigned and made a sharp attack on Chamberlain's policy in parliament. Although the government received a big majority (party discipline played a role here), the debate did not go well for it. The ovation prepared by the Conservatives to greet the Prime Minister's appearance in the Chamber was a flop. Here is an entry in my diary dated October 6:

> The speeches made from the government bench were mostly unsuccessful. Chamberlain was agitated, excited, lost the thread of his discourse, could not handle the many shouts and remarks from the opposition benches and altogether was very weak. . . . Inskip, Burgin and Hoare in the House of Commons and Halifax and Stanhope in the Lords did not win any laurels either. . . . According to Burgin it appeared that in essence nothing special had happened, that everything was fine in this best of all possible worlds, and that the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia which had been sanctioned at Munich was nothing but 'a slight modification of borders' in central Europe, arising from the principles of justice and self-determination. . . . The backbenchers preferred to remain silent. Not even all the Ministers spoke: Elliot, Stanley, Hore-Belisha and others were as silent as the grave. Elliot even tried not to sit on the front bench. . . . Those who spoke were in the main representatives of the Opposition and the Conservative rebels. . . . There were particularly strong speeches from Churchill and Morrison. The

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> latter's speech evoked a protest from the German Ambassador in London. . . . Parliamentary old hands drew the conclusion that things had gone against the government: the best evidence of this was the government's decision not to hold an election in the near future.

The man in the street had something else to say: 'Of course, it's good that there won't be war. But won't all this Munich story later on boomerang against us?' There was awkwardness, alarm and anxiety for the future in millions of hearts. Because of this the Prime Minister's supporters exerted every effort to lay the blame for Munich on the Soviet Union.

On October 10, 1938, one MP, Lord Winterton, tried to explain to a public meeting that it was inevitable that Britain make concessions to Hitler because of the Soviet Union's military weakness and its reluctance to fulfil its obligations under the mutual aid pact with Czechoslovakia. I protested to Halifax and had a statement from the Soviet Embassy published in the press, quoting the speech made by Maxim Litvinov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in the League of Nations, and thus refuting Winterton's slander. Two days later, at another public meeting, he repeated his invention. I handed another statement to the press which said that it was pointless to quarrel with a man who deliberately closed his eyes to the truth, and that no amount of repetition of lies could turn them into the truth. Labour Party members conducted a cross examination in parliament and Chamberlain had to repudiate Winterton.

After Munich the shade of Hitler hung over Czechoslovakia. One result of this was that on October 5, 1938, President Benes resigned. Jan Masaryk, who in these critical days showed great courage and dignity, could not remain Czechoslovak Ambassador in London any longer and also resigned. The last time I came up against the question of Munich in practice was in Geneva, at the end of May 1939. The 105th session of the League of Nations Council was about to be held and the representative of the USSR was due to preside at this session. The Soviet government delegated this responsibility to me.

On March 15, 1939, Hitler, who had sworn to Chamberlain at Munich that the Sudetenland was his last territorial demand in Europe, had conducted a blitzkrieg on Czechoslovakia and transformed it into 'the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia' and 'independent Slovakia'. The Munich agreement had been torn up, but Britain and France, having taken upon themselves at Munich an obligation to guarantee the integrity and inviolability of Czechoslovakia after the Sudeten amputation, did not lift a finger. However,

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Edvard Benes, from Chicago, where he had gone on retirement and where he was reading lectures at the university, sent the League of Nations a vigorous protest against the Nazis' latest crime and asked that the question of Czechoslovakia be placed on the agenda of the 105th session of the League Council. He sent copies of his telegram to the governments of the USSR, France and some other powers.

When I discussed with M Avenol (France) who was then Secretary-General of the League of Nations, the agenda for the forthcoming session, we naturally came to Benes's telegram. Avenol waved his hand contemptuously and snapped: 'Well, that's for the archives.'

'What do you mean, for the archives?' I said, getting angry. 'This Council meeting will be the first since Hitler seized Czechoslovakia. It cannot ignore such a blatant case of aggression!'

Avenol began to instruct me that, according to League of Nations procedure, only documents coming from governments could be raised at its sessions and, since Benes was no longer President of Czechoslovakia, his telegram did not have to be read at the session. Avenol quoted the Swedish Foreign Minister, Sandler, who had been Chairman of the Council before me. The telegram had arrived while he was in office and he had agreed with Avenol that it could not qualify as a document for consideration by the League of Nations. Avenol maintained that the new chairman (myself) had no right to revise the decision of his predecessor. I replied sharply, telling him that my view of the telegram and its status differed radically and that I would do everything I could to announce it at the Council session. Avenol flew into a rage and began to scream that it was customary on points of controversy for the League to follow the advice of its Secretary-General. I looked at him and said:

> I ask you, M Avenol, to bear in mind that you see before you a chairman who considers that the Secretary-General should follow the advice of the chairman. In this case my advice is this: if one point of procedure forbids the reading of Edvard Benes's telegram, then we have to find another point which will permit it.

As he listened, Avenol went red and white in turn, and finally exclaimed: 'I know by heart all the articles of procedure. . . . The kind of article you require is not there!' I laughed and replied: 'We'll see.' I made enquiries among competent people and, of course, found a suitable clause. The next day, at the session of the League's Council, I announced:

> Not as chairman of the present session of the Council, but as the representative of the Soviet government, I have the honour to read to you a telegram

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received by my government from Edvard Benes, former President of the Czechoslovak Republic.

I read the protest of Edvard Benes. Avenol almost choked with fury, but could do nothing. Immediately I proposed that Benes's telegram be distributed to all League members as material for the forthcoming League Assembly which was to open in September 1939. Halifax, Bonnet and other Council members maintained a gloomy silence. I took advantage of their confusion and, before any of them could pull himself together, I hastily said: 'Any comments? . . . No! Good!' In this way the question of Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia was placed on the agenda of the 105th session of the League of Nations Council and referred for consideration to the next League Assembly.

Munich was a tremendous historic drama not only for Czechoslovakia, but for all mankind. It was a severe trial for the great powers. It was a test of the honesty, farsightedness and courage of their policy in international affairs. What were the results of this trial? Nothing that has been said here leaves the slightest doubt that not one of the capitalist powers involved in the Munich drama stood up to the test; the depravity of their policy is revealed. Only the Soviet Union, the one socialist country in the world at that time, proved equal to the situation.

THE THALIDOMIDE JUDGEMENT —A WARNING

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright
Barrister

THE case of the thalidomide children has proved to be one of the saddest tragedies to occur under the derived results of capitalist industry. It will be recalled that, some years ago, a pharmaceutical drug, thalidomide, proved to have the most dire effects when administered to pregnant women. A number of children were born who were physically defective in various ways and were deformed to a serious extent. The parents sought compensation from the manufacturers, Distillers Company (Biochemicals) Ltd, and, about twelve years ago, writs were issued. A long and protracted series of negotiations took place between the manufacturers and the afflicted parents. In the end, the *Sunday Times* intervened and took up the cause of

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the parents. As a result of the publicity which the article received, the level of compensation offered was increased materially.

But twelve years have gone by and some of the negotiations are by no means concluded, whilst the writs are still operative as the cases have yet to be tried or negotiated. This is clearly a far longer gap than might have been anticipated. The time lag is considerable even when it is judged by the somewhat slow process which attends a normal civil action in the High Court when full pleadings have to be made and there are all the possibilities of an appeal. Usually, in any action, it is contempt of court to seek to influence opinion upon the details of the case whilst the writ is still alive. For example, in an action for defamation, it is a serious contempt if the defendant repeats the defamation before the action is heard and a verdict reached.

In the circumstances, the *Sunday Times* prepared about two years ago an article consisting of detailed evidence and argument designed to show that the manufacturers did not exercise due care to ascertain that the drug was safe before they put it on the market. In the ordinary course of events, it would be asserted that such an article would constitute a contempt of court and any legal adviser would advise against its publication whilst the action was pending or negotiations continuing. Yet, the situation was unique in view of the time lag involved, and the *Sunday Times* went ahead and advertised the forthcoming article.

As a result, appeal was made to the Attorney-General as the guardian of public rights, and the case of *Attorney-General v Times Newspapers Ltd* was launched. It should be noticed that the background of the proceedings does not lie in the merits or otherwise of the impending negotiations concerning the drug or for a negligence in its distribution but purely in the constitutional issue of contempt of court. On November 17, 1972, the matter was argued before a divisional court and an injunction was granted against the publication of the article. The case was taken to appeal by the *Sunday Times* and the Court of Appeal heard the case on February 16, 1973. An important decision was reached which adjudged that, in the light of all the surrounding facts, the injunction should be discharged and publication allowed to the article.

But further appeal was now made to the House of Lords who, on July 17, 1973, decided that publication would be a contempt of court. The injunction should last so long as any outstanding claims in pending proceedings against the manufacturers had not been tried or compromised in a negotiated settlement. Again, it must be

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stressed that many claims are still outstanding and, with negotiations taking a long while, it may well be some years before a situation will be reached where the injunction could vanish into thin air.

Naturally, the decision has been received by the public at large with very mixed feelings. An important newspaper claims to possess detailed material of public interest concerning pharmaceutical practices. But it can be restrained from publication by proceedings and negotiations which, owing to their very size and protracted nature, are likely to last over many years. Thus, the public is kept in ignorance of the manner in which industrial capitalism works so far as one corner of its activities is concerned.

Yet, the real difficulty lies in the fact that the judgements as printed out in the *Times* for July 19, 1973, are very difficult to disown as being good law. When precedent in various contempt cases going back to the eighteenth century and drawn from Commonwealth sources generally is considered, there can be no doubt that newspaper comment and criticism upon the subject-matter of proceedings or negotiations does constitute a contempt of court. Precedent is binding to a high degree in such matters and it would be difficult to urge that there has been a misjudgement at law. The public is free to criticise that which is done in the courts of justice but only after the courts of justice have acted and reached their decision. On the whole, this is not a bad rule. It would be an intolerable situation if newspapers or other media set out to try cases before they had been heard, and to bring their influence to bear upon what was to be decided in the actual court. Lord Justice Salmon had some very stern and justifiable things to say concerning what amounted to a trial of the as yet uncharged Dr Savundra by television a few years ago.

For example, a left-wing leader is charged with sedition. His utterances have aroused the capitalist press over many months and now he is arrested and trial in a Crown Court is pending. If the judge sums up properly, he will tell the jury that they are absolutely forbidden to consider anything other than that which they have heard given as evidence in court. It would make against any vestige of justice if the capitalist media were allowed to fill up the weeks preceding the trial by publishing articles saying that the defendant is guilty, that he ought to be severely punished and that any jury could find in no other way. Clearly, tirades of this type could influence potential jurymen and could introduce new and illicit influences into the case. On the whole, the contempt rule is desirable and it is imposed firmly by the High Court.

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An interesting example of this behaviour occurred in 1932 when the notorious rector of Stiffkey was cited to appear before the church court to answer for his conduct. A Sunday newspaper, the *Empire News*, paralleled the *Daily Herald* by publishing articles saying that the rector was innocent and about to be victimised. The chancellor of the diocese of Norwich took action in the King's Bench Division for contempt of his court and both papers were heavily penalised. In the same way, punishment was doled out to all responsible in 1950, when the *Daily Mirror* published material which might well have prejudiced the objective and impartial trial of Haigh, the acid-bath murderer.

But it must be noticed that the general rule contemplated a trial as an impending event or the negotiations as immediate. It was not framed against a background where proceedings could be protracted for years and all comment stifled. If this indeed is good law then the time has come when law should be changed by statute. Let it be supposed that it is not the *Sunday Times* which is involved but *Tribune* or the *Morning Star*. These newspapers exist notoriously for left-wing political comment. Again, let it be supposed that the issue is one of political criticism and is of a complicated and protracted nature. The issue of a writ would mean nothing less than that all comment would be banned and that the ban would only disappear when the projected comments had become so stale and out-dated as to be useless. The newspapers would be effectively gagged and silenced.

This would amount to an extension of the old election trick of issuing a writ against an opponent who is letting too much out to the public at large. The writ may be indefensible but it will compel silence whilst the election is actually on. If it is dropped later, it will still have achieved its set purpose. Indeed, it does not seem to be necessary to elaborate upon the extent to which the law would assist a silencing of left-wing or working class propaganda so long as the trial or negotiations can be protracted. A change in the law is decidedly necessary and it may well be urged at a time when contempt of court is a subject generally under discussion.

If a writ enjoins silence, this should only be for a short period. Possibly three to six months should be sufficient. After this date, comment should be free unless the other side could show the court that grave injury would be done to the administration of impartial justice by publication. Certainly, the use of a writ to silence opponents by protracting the negotiations or legislation to an unreasonable extent is not what the rule intended originally to protect. It is on a

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level with issuing writs for defamation well knowing that the other side, whether they be in the right or in the wrong, will be unable to afford the cost of defence and will certainly compromise. As the law stands, it permits what is virtually an abuse of the law concerning contempt of court.

Another aspect of the matter needs a brief mention. Many commodities, such as some patent medicines, are open to grave criticism and are far from satisfactory as means of obtaining the services which they profess to supply. This elementary fact is well known to such bodies as the Socialist Medical Association and the like. It might be asked why they do not make the facts known to the public at large and thus warn them against disappointment or worse. The reason is that nobody could afford to defend the resulting action in defamation. An ordinary citizen would find himself fighting some giant monopoly combine whose resources would be used to crush him with overwhelming legal costs. In the present case, immense financial resources enabling legal fighting at a high level have had the effect of protracting the proceedings over many years.

Of course anybody has the right to fight to the limits of their strength. But it may well be asked whether they have the right to do so at the expense of the public interest, an end which may well be achieved by the enforced withholding of relevant information from the public at large during long drawn-out proceedings. The time has come when these issues should be tackled to the full by the Law Commission. Defamation must be tried in a manner which enables the courts to be open in practice to every man. The strength of a writ in enforcing silence is something which should be controlled and limited very severely. It was the late eighteenth century radical constitutionalist, John Horne Tooke, who said: 'The courts are open to every man—but so is the London Tavern,' a saying which Mr Justice Darling once paraphrased as: 'The courts are open to every man—but so is the Ritz Hotel.'

Again, the further question may just be mentioned as to whether any appeal to the House of Lords is necessary at all. The Lords were reinserted by the Tories in 1875 through an amending act which modified the Liberals' Judicature Act, 1873, when the House of Lords was abolished as a court of appeal. There is no logical reason why a second appeal should be possible in a civil action as a matter of course save that it will increase the costs materially and thus make things far more difficult for the ordinary litigant. Writing some years ago, Lord Gardiner, the Lord Chancellor of the last Labour government, suggested the abolition of this court. In difficult cases, the

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Court of Appeal could always sit as a full court of five judges. Answer has been made that the House of Lords is of a particular quality. As a part of parliament, it possesses powers for an initiation of legal policy which are not possessed by other courts.

If this is so, it is a great pity that this power was not seen more clearly in *Attorney-General v Times Newspapers Ltd!* However, perhaps the *Sunday Times* has not altogether wasted its time and its money. The case gives a clear warning of some general dangers involved in the existing law of contempt, and it indicates several other matters not entirely dissociated from it which call for remedy through a drastic legal reform.

BRITISH-SOVIET TRADE UNION AND LABOUR RELATIONS

Joint statement made by the delegations of the AUCCTU and the General Council of the TUC, Moscow, July 20, 1973

A delegation of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) consisting of Victor Feather, General Secretary of the TUC (leader of the delegation); Mr J. L. Jones, Chairman of the International Committee of the TUC General Council and General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union; Mr T. Jackson, General Secretary of the Union of Post Office Workers and Mr P. Coldrick, both members of the TUC General Council, and Mr J. A. Hargreaves, Secretary of the TUC's International Committee, stayed in the Soviet Union from July 15-20, 1973, at the invitation of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU).

Besides Moscow the delegation visited Minsk, where they saw the 'Belaz' motor plant, met workers and trade unionists, acquainted themselves with working and living conditions of workers and with trade union activities, and saw a pioneer camp. The delegation visited the Khatyn Memorial near Minsk. They also visited the towns of Vladimir and Suzdal. The delegation were cordially welcomed everywhere they went. The delegation had a meeting with AUCCTU Presidium members and leading trade union activists, at which Mr V. Feather told them about trade union activities in Britain. They expressed satisfaction with their visit to the USSR and spoke highly of the specialised activities of the Soviet trade unions.

In Moscow the TUC delegation had talks with a delegation of the AUCCTU. Taking part in the talks from the Soviet side were Mr A. N. Shelepin, President of the AUCCTU; Mr P. T. Pimenov, Secretary of the AUCCTU; Mr L. V. Petrov, Member of the Presidium of the AUCCTU and President of the Moscow Trades Council; Mr N. I. Kovalev, President of the Central Committee of the Railway Transport Workers' Union; Mr V. K. Konnov, President of the Central Committee of the Automobile Transport and Road Workers' Union; and Mr B. A. Averyanov, head of the International Department of the AUCCTU.

In the course of the talks, which were open and friendly, the sides exchanged

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information on trade union activities in their respective countries; they had a broad exchange of views on the possible development of bilateral relations between the AUCCTU and the TUC and several specific aspects of this field were considered. The AUCCTU delegation expressed the solidarity of Soviet trade unions with trade union activities in Britain for better working and living conditions in their country.

The delegations expressed the view that at present there are possibilities for a further and deeper development of relations between trade unions of the USSR and Great Britain, and for their wider bilateral co-operation, which corresponds with the interests of Soviet and British working people, noting that—in spite of the difference of conditions in which they worked and of ideological differences—the trade unions of the USSR and Great Britain had similar objectives and adopted common attitudes over many issues, including the struggle for peace, further improvement of working and living conditions of workpeople, and protection of their legitimate interests, and the development of mutual understanding and friendship among the peoples of the USSR and Britain.

The AUCCTU and the TUC believe that there are broad possibilities for the deeper development of co-operation in the spheres of trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural relations between the USSR and Great Britain. This would considerably benefit the peoples of both our countries and would contribute to a further improvement of the international situation in Europe and throughout the world.

The delegations of the AUCCTU and the TUC expressed profound satisfaction with the current relaxation in the international situation.

Welcoming the successful completion in Helsinki of the first stage of the All-European Conference on Security and Co-operation, both sides expressed their confidence that the process of relaxation of international tensions and of building up of co-operation among European countries will further develop successfully, at its subsequent stages, in the interest of working people and of all nations of the European continent. They expressed profound satisfaction in connection with the conclusion of the Paris Agreements on Vietnam. Common concern was expressed for a speedy peaceful settlement of the Middle East situation on the basis of the well-known UN Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967.

During the talks an extensive exchange of views on matters concerning the international trade union movement, first of all in Europe, took place. On the European trade union movement the two sides expressed confidence that national trade union centres of the European continent, irrespective of their international affiliation, would be able to co-operate fruitfully to promote the interests of the working class and all workpeople in their actions against the self-seeking policies pursued by national and multinational monopolies, directed against the interests of workpeople. The AUCCTU and the TUC fully support a proposal that a meeting of leaders of all European national trade union centres should be held during the Second European Regional Conference of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva. They will assist in every possible way in the meeting taking place in the interests of co-operation among trade unions of the European continent. Both sides expressed themselves in support of the idea of an all-European trade union conference on social-economic problems held in the nearest future.

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The AUCCTU and the TUC consider that there are now real possibilities for broad and fruitful international trade union co-operation, including co-operation within the framework of the International Labour Organisation.

The TUC delegation thanked the AUCCTU for the hospitality they were accorded and invited an AUCCTU delegation on a return visit to Britain. The invitation was accepted with gratitude.

Official communiqué on the talks which took place in Moscow between Soviet representatives and a delegation of the British Labour Party

A delegation from the National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party visited the USSR from June 4 to 11 as guests of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

The delegation was led by the Chairman of the Labour Party, William Simpson. Other members were the Rt Hon Edward Short MP, deputy leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party; Ian Mikardo MP, chairman of the international committee of the Labour Party; John Chalmers, chairman of the organisation committee of the Labour Party; Joan Lestor MP, member of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party; Ron Hayward, General Secretary of the Labour Party, and Tom McNally, international secretary of the Labour Party.

The delegation had extensive talks with representatives of the central committee of the CPSU.

From the CPSU the participants in the meeting were M. A. Suslov, member of the political bureau of the CPSU Central Committee, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, chairman of the foreign affairs commission of the Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet; B. N. Ponomaryov, alternate member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, chairman of the foreign affairs commission of the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet; Academician N. N. Inozemtsev, alternate member of the CPSU Central Committee, director of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences; A. S. Chernyayev, deputy head of the international department of the CPSU Central Committee.

The problems of strengthening security in Europe and those pertaining to British-Soviet relations were discussed with A. A. Gromyko, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

Inter-parliamentary ties promoting an atmosphere of mutual understanding and co-operation among nations were the subject of the talk which the delegation had with A. P. Shytikov, member of the CPSU Central Committee, Chairman of the Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The role of the Party and the Soviet press was touched upon in the talks with M. V. Zimyanin, member of the CPSU Central Committee, editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, and member of its editorial board.

The delegation visited the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences for detailed and wide-ranging discussions on a number of important and urgent international questions and problems of Soviet-British relations.

At the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade and the State Committee for Science and Technology the delegation discussed in detail the present state of Anglo-Soviet trade. Both sides stated their belief that the time was ripe for fresh efforts

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to explore further the possibilities for joint co-operation.

In the course of the talks held at the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, both sides stressed that the achievement of an enduring peace presupposes renunciation of the use or threat of force, cessation of the arms race and the adoption of practical disarmament measures, including a ban on nuclear weapons for all time. Of great importance for peace would be the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe without infringing the security of the interested states.

The Labour Party delegation stated that the British Labour Party is in favour of the convocation of the Conference on European Security and Co-operation this summer, and the idea of setting up at the Conference a standing body on security and co-operation in Europe. It acclaimed the conclusion of treaties by the USSR, the Polish People's Republic and the German Democratic Republic with the Federal Republic of Germany, and expressed the Labour Party's high appreciation of the results of the visit by L. I. Brezhnev to the Federal Republic of Germany, and voiced the opinion that the forthcoming visit of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee to the United States would be of great positive significance for international relations.

The Labour Party delegation emphasised the high priority the Labour Party attached to a successful outcome to talks on mutual, balanced forces reduction.

Both sides emphasised their deep satisfaction with the ending of the war in Vietnam and declared their readiness to contribute in every way to the establishment of a lasting peace in Indo-China. The common concern of all the progressive forces for a settlement of the situation in the Middle East on the basis of the United Nations Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967, was noted.

The delegation had talks with the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR and the Economic Research Institute of the USSR State Planning Committee concerning the planning and management of the Soviet economy, the activities of the Soviet trade unions, education and the upbringing of youth.

In the course of the discussions, a point of view was expressed that there are considerable possibilities for co-operation in the sphere of culture and exchange of ideas, for an increase in the flow of information, contacts among nations, if it is done in the spirit of mutual respect and non-interference in each other's affairs.

The conversations and exchange of opinions showed that there were real possibilities for improving Soviet-British relations in the interest of peace and a *détente*, and in the interest of extending the traditions of friendship between the working people of the USSR and Great Britain.

The delegation of the Labour Party voiced its striving and readiness to facilitate in every way the development of political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural co-operation between Great Britain and the USSR, which will promote a stabilisation of the situation in Europe and the development of positive tendencies in international affairs.

Throughout the week, the talks were conducted in a frank and friendly atmosphere. At the same time it was noted that on a number of questions the CPSU and the British Labour Party hold different views which reflect the differences in their ideological positions.

A visit was made to Leningrad and in addition to seeing the many cultural

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and artistic treasures of that city, the opportunity was taken for informal talks with local political and trade union leaders. A wreath in tribute to those who had sacrificed their lives in defence of Leningrad during the second world war was laid on behalf of the British Labour Party by the Party Chairman Mr W. Simpson.

Both sides spoke up for a continuation of contacts. With this aim in view, the delegation of the British Labour Party extended an invitation for a delegation from the Soviet Union to visit Great Britain in 1974.

On June 11 the delegation of the British Labour Party left for home.

BOOKS

Time to Change Course
Jack Woddis
Communist Party, 150 pp, 30p

Time to Change Course argues a powerful case. It is a call for the labour movement as a whole, but especially for the left and the Communist Party, to campaign for socialism now, as the necessary way to advance in this period.

The case for changing course is made out on the basis of an array of compelling facts: the growth and intensity of the crisis of capitalism; therefore, the scale and ferocity of the attacks of big business and the Tories on the working class; the fight back by the trade union and labour movement on a new high level of organisation and confidence; the new world situation in which the British capitalist crisis is to be seen in its setting—where imperialism is no longer the dominant force in the world; the growth of mass and progressive struggle on a wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues, in which alongside the labour and trade union movement other sections of the people, students, women, pensioners, tenants and others are being drawn into struggle.

What is demonstrated convincingly are the new forces and new alignments in the ranks of the working class, the significant left developments in the trade union movement, the increasing challenge not merely to the Tories but increasingly to the right-wing trade union and labour leaders.

What is hammered home with a wealth of illustration is that up to now the whole activity of the movement has been *defensive*, the reaction to the attacks of the employers and the Tories. The need for today, if we are not to go on running like mad simply in order to stay on the same spot, is to change course, to make a positive challenge to capitalism, to go over to the struggle for power, working class power, to socialism.

The analysis of the basis of capitalist class power is strongly and clearly set out; the question of the necessary transformation of parliament to serve the needs of working class power is simply indicated; the need to direct the struggle against the right-wing allies of capitalism in the ranks of the trade union and labour leadership is emphasised.

There is much in this book which cannot be brought out in a brief review. I believe that when its ideas have become the property of the leading ranks in the Communist Party, the trade unions and the left of the Labour Party, then the whole movement will be transformed: and this is the splendid perspective of this creative and profoundly Marxist analysis.

BEN AINLEY

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Workers' Control
Ernie Roberts
Allen & Unwin, 308 pp, £4.25

'WORKERS' CONTROL' is a term that today is in the news. All kinds of people are writing about it—praising—cursing—the final solution—a madman's nightmare—you pays your money and you takes your choice. Now that well-known militant, Ernie Roberts, has written a thought-provoking book on the subject.

Many of his facts, arguments and presentation one will accept but, alas, from this book, as from some others on the same subject, a number of important questions still remain unclear and unanswered. For example, can we have workers' control under capitalism? Ernie Roberts, I know, believes that only under socialism can the working class really own and control their own destinies, but I got the feeling in reading the book that workers' control or the best part of it was possible under capitalism within a single plant or combine. Another question under capitalism: Is the obtaining of workers' representation on management boards likely to make any difference in the control of the firm or is it more likely to hold the lads as hostages to the employers and help to maintain and spread confusion?

Workers' control after the political and economic take-over of power is one thing but workers' control whilst capitalism still exists is quite another. However the arguments are here in the book simply and cogently argued. You may not agree with Ernie Roberts (and often I did not) but his book cannot be dismissed. It should be read and at least be in your public library.

JULIE JACOBS

LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

The treatment of unemployment by the General Council of the Congress is a sorry tale. The only time any attempt has been made to co-operate with the unemployed was during the Hunger March, when the question had reached such vast dimensions that the Council thought they would reap some publicity out of it—after all the spade work had been done by the men whom previously the Council had refused to look at. They therefore co-operated with the unemployed organisation and held a special Unemployed Sunday, and after that—nothing further has been done. But with the appalling prospects that lie ahead the unemployed will again begin to agitate, and October and November will again witness mass agitation by the unemployed all over the country. What can Congress do in this situation? Its duty is very simple. It must instruct the General Council to commence a joint campaign with all working class organisations around the slogan: 'Work or Full Maintenance at Highest Trade Union Rates.'

The past policy of letting the unemployed look after themselves should cease. The idea that the unemployed are a class apart from those workers who happen to be at work must be killed. These things and defects in our present methods can be altered by the General Council calling together representatives from all workers' organisations, forming a joint committee, and then using the whole resources of the movement to bring about a successful conclusion to this campaign for 'Work or Full Maintenance for the Unemployed.'

(From 'The Issues Before the Trades Union Congress', by Harry Pollitt, *Labour Monthly*, September 1923)

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LM FILM IN MOSCOW

DURING the 1973 Moscow Film Festival, the Union of Soviet Film Workers arranged a special showing on July 24 of 'Fifty Fighting Years', the story of *Labour Monthly*, at Dom Kino (the House of Cinema). This was attended by many distinguished personalities of the Soviet cinema, and also by journalists, radio and television representatives, and those with an interest in the historic record brought alive by the makers of the film.

It was received with great acclaim and the directors, who were present, were complimented on their work and asked to convey the good wishes of members of the audience for the work done by our journal. In the audience were the President of the Union of Soviet Film Workers, A. V. Karaganov, the Head of the Documentary Section, A. E. Novogrudsky, and Peoples' Artists of the USSR, Grigory Roshal and Vera Stroyeva, both of whom expressed their delight.

A further international showing was arranged, at the invitation of the Association of Film Workers of the GDR, during the World Youth Festival in Berlin.

In Britain the 16mm showings are going well, and readers and many others are having the experience of seeing their own recent history in the labour and trade union movement on the screen. The increased interest in *LM* must be partly responsible for our holiday-month total having been kept out of worse danger by some welcome donations from new contributors who have joined our regulars. Our July total was:

£65.69

REGULAR DONATIONS came from: 'Oliver Twist' 50p, S Morrissy £1, H Brindle 25p, 'Patrick' 50p, Marie Philibert 25p, J Rink 25p, Mr and Mrs Kokos 25p, N Marcus £5, P Ladkin 50p, 'S Mill' £1, J W R Clark £3, L'Humanité 30p, Stella and Len Perkins 25p, A Calder 56p, R Paul 50p, A Corbett £1, Les Bates (+Rourke and Proos) 50p, Mr and Mrs Guinan 25p, Blackburn Branch 15p, Oldham Branch 10p, C T M 50p, Len Potter £1, Southend Branch £1.25, K and B R (USA) £2.50, W E Rounce 25p, Ben Ainley £1, 'Pax' 50p, D Belenson £1, W H Laithwaite £5, 'Socialist Sailor' £2, I J Pearce 50p, J D (Canada) 73p, A M T (for Fernando and Guilherme) 5p.

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Our thanks to you all.

Nicola Seyd

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Social Partnership or Class Struggle?, V. Usenin. Progress (Central Books), 258 pp, 75p.

Outline History of the Soviet Working Class, Y. S. Borisova and others. Progress (Central Books), 388 pp, £1.25.

Welfare the Basic Task, N. Buslyakov. Progress (Central Books), 140 pp, 60p.

Poverty and Equality in Britain—A Study of Social Security and Taxation, J. C. Kincaid. Penguin, 278 pp, 60p.

The General Household Survey—Introductory Report, Louis Moss and others. HMSO, 564 pp, £1.80.

Political Writings of William Morris, edited by A. L. Morton. Lawrence & Wishart, 246 pp, £1.

Political Purpose in Trade Unions, Irving Richter. Allen & Unwin, 258 pp, £4.50.

The Multinationals, Christopher Tugendhat. Penguin, 288 pp, 50p.

The Juggernauts: The Age of the Big Corporation, Graham Bannock. Penguin, 306 pp, 65p.

Industrialism and Industrial Man, Clark Kerr and others. Penguin, 340 pp, 60p.

Portuguese Africa and the West, William Minter. Penguin, 176 pp, 40p.

The Struggle for Mozambique, Eduardo Mondlane. Penguin, 224 pp, 40p.

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